witch-doctors and makers of love-potions must look with sick envy at the impositions of our advertisers and psychiatrists, reflecting that their clientele, though black savages, would never for an instant countenance deception so gross and palpable. When people cease to believe in God, G. K. Chesterton has pointed out, they do not then believe in nothing, but—what is far more dangerous—in anything. The Christian religion required us only to believe in certain specific dogma and super-natural happenings like miracles; the religion of Science which has succeeded it, as I indicated in *The Thirties,* bestows its *imprimatur* upon any proposition, however nonsensical, which can be stated in terms of the requisite statistical-scientific mumbo-jumbo. Thus a condition of moral, intellectual and spiritual confusion has been created in which, not only faith, but meaning itself, has disappeared.

I well remember how, seated on my bed in my Ash Vale barrack hut, with a pencil in my hand and paper before me, striving to finish *The Thirties,* one phrase intruded itself into all my thoughts and deliberations—'Lost in the darkness of change*. It seemed to sum up my, and everyone else's, situation. We were lost; like children trying to extricate some familiar shape or sound out of the darkness which had fallen. All we knew was that when the darkness lifted a new landscape with new contours would be revealed. Meanwhile, we had to reconcile ourselves to living in darkness. *Fiat Nox!* —it was our foe, and must be accepted.

The phrase seems to me as valid now as it did

in 1940. We are still lost in the darkness of change. If anything, the darkness is more impenetrable than it was then. The difference, as far as I am concerned, is that now I find more compensations in such a plight. In times of bright light one is so easily dazzled. How readily one might have accepted, in stabler and more vainglorious circumstances, the pretensions of power, the certainties of authority, the false sense of security generated by seeming permanence. As it is, one accepts nothing. One is driven back upon those other certainties, propounded in darkness but shining with